



Welcome to Worship

*Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!*

—Psalm 95:6

The Sanctuary

We are delighted that you have joined us for worship in this sanctuary that praises God and His creation. A focal point of our sanctuary is the stained glass window centered in the large cross on the wall of the chancel. The lilies and the cross in the window remind us of the resurrection of Jesus. Legend has it that beautiful white lilies sprung up in the Garden of Gethsemane where drops of Christ's sweat fell to the ground in His final hours of sorrow. The doves in the border symbolize the Holy Spirit, and the anchor is a symbol of hope.

The lighting of the *candles* represents Christ's presence in worship. The two candles flanking the cross symbolize Jesus' two natures, human and divine.

Acolytes are attendants or helpers who assist in worship by lighting and extinguishing candles and bearing the flame in worship processions. At St. Mark's, older children and youth serve as acolytes in the traditional services. The procession symbolizes our approach to God, led by the acolyte and followed by the ministers and other worship leaders.

The *paraments* are the fabric hangings on the pulpit and altar table. Their colors correspond to the liturgical seasons of the Christian year:

Advent	<i>Blue</i>	Signifies the royalty of Christ
Christmas	<i>White</i>	Symbolizes purity and joy and the glory of Christ
Epiphany of the Lord	<i>White</i>	Symbolizes purity and joy and the glory of Christ
Ordinary Time (the period after Epiphany)	<i>Green</i>	Represents hope and peace, and the ongoing growth of the church
Lent	<i>Purple</i>	Represents penitence and mourning
Easter	<i>White</i>	Symbolizes purity and joy and the glory of Christ
Pentecost	<i>Red</i>	Symbolizes fire, blood, and the coming of the Holy Spirit
Ordinary Time (the period after Pentecost)	<i>Green</i>	Represents hope and peace, and the ongoing growth of the church

Altar flowers are sponsored by members of the congregation in celebration of special events. Other items on the altar, banners, and other décor in the sanctuary are planned to add to the worship experience.

The Service

The order of service is detailed in a weekly worship bulletin available from the ushers as you enter the sanctuary. The words for congregational prayers and responses are printed in the bulletin and displayed on the screen as part of the video presentation. Words to hymns and songs are also shown on the screen. For those who prefer to see the musical notation, hymnals are available for the traditional services.

It is a tradition at St. Mark's that congregation members greet one another during the Passing of the Peace of Christ. We also join hands to sing the closing song of the service "*God be With You*".

The Sacraments

Baptism – St. Mark's celebrates the sacrament of baptism for adults and children as a part of regular Sunday morning services. The ministers will invite the person being baptized and their family and friends to come forward to the altar rail. For very young children, the congregation traditionally sings "*Jesus Loves Me*" using the baptized child's name in the chorus at the conclusion of the baptism.

Communion – St. Mark's congregation celebrates the sacrament of Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month and at some special services. Lay persons assist the ministers in serving communion. All who intend to lead a Christian life, together with their children, are invited to receive communion. If you prefer that your children not receive communion, please let the pastor know as you approach the serving station. We celebrate communion through the method of intinction—you will be given a piece of bread and offered a chalice of grape juice in which to partially dip the bread before consuming the elements. The ushers will direct you to the serving stations. If you need to have communion served to you in your seat, please indicate this to the ushers and they will have the servers come to you. Gluten-free elements are available. Many choose to pause at the altar rail to pray after taking communion. Donations left at the altar rail are used to support special needs of the community.

Information about St. Mark's

Visitors are requested to complete the Response Card found in the bulletin and place it in the offering plate so that we can provide you with information about our church. Information about activities and opportunities can be found in *The Connection* which you received with the bulletin. The pastor also sends out a weekly e-mail highlighting upcoming activities.

Children

A nursery staffed by church staff and volunteers is available for children age 3 and under. Please ask an usher for directions.

*We welcome you to St. Mark's and
hope that you are blessed in worship today.*